

## Abstract

This diploma thesis deals with the theme of motherhood in the poetry of Sylvia Plath. The main objective of the thesis is to explore how pregnancy, childlessness, and motherhood are understood by Plath in her poetry. I show how she transposed her thoughts and experiences of maternity into it and identify the main influencing outside factors. The poetry will be studied and read from a biographical, sociocultural, and feminist standpoint. Studies of motherhood and domesticity in the United States, predominantly by Betty Friedan and Glenna Matthews, will be analyzed in order to offer a general context within which Plath created her poetry and to demonstrate how she contested the idealized perception of motherhood at the time. To understand women's writing in a male-dominated literary canon and the ways in which Plath fought back against the language and archetypes imposed on her, demystifying motherhood in the process, feminist literary studies, predominantly *The Madwoman in the Attic* by Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar will be consulted.

The thesis will consist of four chapters: the first chapter will deal with biographical occurrences in Plath's life, covering known life events recorded in *The Unabridged Journals of Sylvia Plath* and *Letters Home* relevant to the topic at hand. The second chapter will be focused on the theory regarding female writing in a male-dominated literary canon. The third chapter will provide a sociocultural analysis of domesticity and motherhood in the United States in the 1950s and the fourth chapter, followed by a comprehensive conclusion outlining the findings, will be concerned with the analysis of Plath's poetry about motherhood and children.